

DROP BEAR

Drop Bear **Level 7 Skirmisher**
Medium Natural Beast (marsupial)

Initiative: +9 **Perception** +5
HP 80; **Bloodied** 40
AC 21; **Fortitude** 20; **Reflex** 19; **Will** 19
Speed 6, climb 3

Standard Actions

⊕ **Boxing Marsupial** ✦ **At-Will**

Attack: Melee Basic 1 (one creature) +12 vs. AC
Hit: 3d6+4 damage.

↓ **Drop (bear) Kick** ✦ **At-Will**

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature) +12 vs AC.
Hit: 2d6+4 damage, and the target is pushed 1 and knocked prone.
Miss: The drop bear can drop prone to push the target 1 and knock them prone.

↓ **Death from Above** ✦ **Encounter**

Requirement: The drop bear must be on a level at least 1 square above the target, and the target must have an empty square adjacent to them.
Effect: The drop bear jumps 6 onto the target, taking no falling damage, and makes the following attack.
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature) +10 vs Reflex
Hit: 3d6+4 damage, and the drop bear occupies the same square as them and grabs them. The target is knocked prone, and cannot stand until they escape the grab.
Miss: The target shifts one or to the nearest unoccupied square, and the drop bear lands in the square the target was in.

Move Actions

Unwieldy Hop ✦ **Recharge**

Effect: The Drop Bear jumps a number of squares equal to it's speed. It is only subject to opportunity attacks from the first and last square of this movement, but if it is hit by an opportunity attack provoked by this movement, both it and the attacker are knocked prone.

Skills Acrobatics +12, Stealth +12, Athletics +10
Str 15(+5); **Dex** 19(+7); **Wis** 14(+5)
Con 15(+5); **Int** 10(+3); **Cha** 10(+3)

Alignment unaligned **Languages** --

Drop bears are aggressive, territorial hunting beasts of a bizarre appearance. Their upper body resembles that of a small bear, with a large black nose, tufted ears, and forelimbs which they can use to walk on or strike at their prey. But their hind legs are overdeveloped and configured for an odd hopping gait, as well as making for formidable weapons in battle. A thick, tail protrudes behind them, adding to their strange appearance. Despite their bulk and method of movement, drop bears can climb trees large enough to carry their weight, and attack prey of their own size or smaller.

Once thought to be a myth, Drop Bears were revealed to be a startling and deadly reality when explorers traveled in greater numbers to the far-off lands where they were said to dwell. These creatures only mildly resemble bears, having come from very different stock, but their aggression, bulk, and the shape of their heads and upper body caused the name to stick. Far more notable however, is the drop bears' powerful hind legs, and their unique method of hunting.

Drop bears are omnivores who spend most of their time in the branches of mighty trees in a primordial rain-forests in which they live. While in the branches, they forage for insects, moving at almost sloth-like speed to preserve energy and appearing docile and placid. However, when they sense creatures moving through the underbrush beneath them, they unhook their claws from the tree bark, and drop through the canopy, slamming into their prey with tremendous force and pinning them to the ground.

Using their forepaws and powerful hind legs, they make short work of most smaller creatures, but can even take on larger prey, including humanoids. While locals know of the threat they represent, the attack of a tree-full of drop bears comes as a terrible shock to most foreign explorers, who tend to scoff at the earnest, yet seemingly outlandish warnings of the natives.

Lore

Nature DC 14: All the info in the intro.

Nature DC 19: Sufficient information to avoid such ambushes in future. .

For use with the 4th Edition

DUNGEONS
& DRAGONS
ROLEPLAYING GAME

Requires the use of the D&D Player's Handbook,[®] Monster Manual,[®] and Dungeon Master's Guide[®] Player's Handbook[®] 2, Monster Manual[®] 2, Adventurer's Vault[™] core rulebooks, available from Wizards of the Coast, LLC

Created by
Michael Jones
for
Catastrophe Games

CATASTROPHEGAMES.COM

FOR WHEN YOU KNOW YOU REALLY
SHOULDN'T, BUT THAT'S WHY YOU KNOW
YOU MUST

TACTICS

Drop bears hunt in loose packs, more or less defined by whatever tree they're hanging in at the time of the ambush. They rarely attack unless they have a high vantage point like this, instead keeping their distance and hopping quickly away if caught on the ground. When dropping, they land on the biggest of the targets, since the less agile a target, the harder it is for them to evade the attack. After pinning down a target, they pummel it with paws and hind legs, knocking prey down when it stands, and hopping away when it rallies, only to strike at it again when it's distracted.

Rumor has it that drop bears have been semi-domesticated by warlike tribes of halflings that live in the deeper forests. In theory, these halflings dwell in the tree-tops, using the drop bears when hunting and in war. In battle, these halflings send their drop bears down on their foes, and snipe at them from low tree branches, as Artillery.

Encounters

Drop bears are natural creatures despite their appearance, and they do not fight so much as hunt. However, they are also extremely aggressive and temperamental when disturbed, and have only recently come into contact with the kind of heroic explorers and adventurers that the average best knows to steer clear of. Natives of their lands sometimes hunt them for food and safety, they do so with practiced caution and skill developed over generations – adventurers and explorers from other lands have none of these skills, and tend to blunder into a drop-bear ambush with no idea what is going on.

As a result, drop bear attacks on foreign explorers tend to be brutal and bloody, as the bears drop gamely onto their prey, and the prey fights back at a clear disadvantage. Bodies both armored and furred fly through the air and crash to the underbrush, with neither side possessing the skill or instincts to know a bad idea when they see one. Drop bears are more than capable of fleeing from such a struggle- their powerful hind legs can carry them in long hops over obstacles and into low tree branches- but they lack the instinctual fear of such creatures that might carry them from the battle before terrible injuries are inflicted on both sides.

The Newer Lands

The newer lands are a distant and exotic shore like none other, where bizarre creatures and mysterious cultures dwell in ancient harmony. While attempts at colonization on other land masses have proven somewhat fruitful for the empires of the world, efforts in the newer lands have been hampered by the fragile, arid environment, and the familiar yet alien qualities of the land. So far, the only successful colony is based on convict labor, and 'transportation' to the newer lands is seen as a grim punishment in more enlightened lands.

Explorers and heroes might come to the newer land for many reasons, but they are most likely there looking for somebody from their own homeland, who fled to the most remote region they could find, or was sent there in chains. For instance, a villain who's plans the heroes spoilt early in their adventures, could years later begin to act against them through intermediaries, while safe from retribution on a far-off shore.

Finding such an individual may be difficult, especially if they have taken to the land and learned it's secrets. An expedition to pursue such a fugitive to a remote outpost is fraught with peril, due to the harsh conditions, unique megafauna like the drop bears, and the odd qualities of the land, which often seem to similar to what the heroes known, yet can turn on them in deadly and unexpected ways.

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Compatibility Logo, D&D, PLAYER'S HANDBOOK, PLAYER'S HANDBOOK 2, DUNGEON MASTER'S GUIDE, MONSTER MANUAL, MONSTER MANUAL 2, and ADVENTURER'S VAULT are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast in the USA and other countries and are used with permission. Certain materials, including 4E References in this publication, D&D core rules mechanics, and all D&D characters and their distinctive likenesses, are property of Wizards of the Coast, and are used with permission under the Dungeons & Dragons 4th Edition Game System License. All 4E References are listed in the 4E System Reference Document, available at www.wizards.com/d20.

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS 4th Edition PLAYER'S HANDBOOK, written by Rob Heinsoo, Andy Collins, and James Wyatt; DUNGEON MASTER'S GUIDE, written by James Wyatt; and MONSTER MANUAL, written by Mike Mearls, Stephen Schubert and James Wyatt; PLAYER'S HANDBOOK 2, written by Jeremy Crawford, Mike Mearls, and James Wyatt; MONSTER MANUAL 2, written by Rob Heinsoo, and Chris Sims; Adventurer's Vault, written by Logan Bonner, Eytan Bernstein, and Chris Sims. © 2008, 2009 Wizards of the Coast. All rights reserved.